



IOWA PUREBRED SWINE COUNCIL

Comments concerning the December 6, 2005 Agricultural Marketing Swine Genomic Listening Session

Certainly, the Iowa Purebred Swine Council recognizes the ever increasing significance and importance of genomic tools in swine breeding. In fact, the Iowa Pork Producers Association and the Iowa Purebred Swine Council have financially supported genomic research at Iowa State University.

However, we feel the question at hand is not the use of genomic tools; but, who has the right to determine the identity of a pure breed of livestock.

It has been a long accepted tradition and inherent right that the purebred breed associations and their members number one priority is to define the identity of a breed and maintain purity through pedigree records of ancestry as well as other verification programs conducted by the association. Breed associations are also involved in breed improvement, merchandising and other programs beneficial to their specific breed and members. However, all goals and programs start with the identity as to what is the breed and organized verification system to identify animals within the breed. The purebred pedigree has been used for many years and recognized world wide in the export of purebred animals and semen. The breed association has the sole right to pedigree certification.

Breed associations do in fact use modern genomic tools for breed improvement and parentage certification. We encourage the USDA and AMS to utilize new genomic tools as they become available and are certified by a particular breed association as part of their breed identity program.

On the other hand we definitely do not feel that the USDA, AMS, FSIS or any other government organization as well as any commercial genomic company has the right to mandate what genomic tools a breed association has to use in their breed identity verification program. In addition, they should not dictate what genomic tools should be used in international marketing of purebred livestock or their products.

We do feel that AMS should serve as a moderator or facilitator between breed associations and foreign entities in determining appropriate tools (non-genomic such as pedigrees as well as genomic) to be best utilized to facilitate trade and guarantee the product identity and quality.

In conclusion, the Iowa Purebred Swine Council, which is a affiliated organization of the Iowa Pork Producers Association, strongly urges the USDA and AMS to maintain the long standing tradition of recognizing each breed associations inherent right to determine breed identity and certify animals, semen or other products being marketed under the breed name or identity.

Sincerely,

Nelda Christian
Vice President
Iowa Purebred Swine Council

Steve L. Kerns
President
Iowa Pork Producers Association